

Now, about the promotion announcement that you made the other day. Is there any reason for eliminating from promotion boards duly constituted officers within the Department here in Washington?

Mr. MURPHY. The promotion—

Mr. WHITENER. Do you feel that the Chief of Police in some strange community would be better able to serve on a promotion board than local officers who have had an opportunity to see it firsthand, the performance of the individual who was considered for promotion?

Mr. MURPHY. Concerning the use of some outside police administrators to assist us in the selection process, Mr. Congressman, my view is that certainly the opinions of the ranking commanders of the Department who have had the opportunity to observe men over the years, their opinions would be most valuable. I think we enrich the selection process somewhat by adding to it the benefit of opinions of outside police experts. I think it is a fact, an unfortunate fact, that our police departments in the United States do not exchange personnel. They are very much entities unto themselves because of the civil service system. I think this is a negative rather than a positive influence.

As I explained earlier, some of the most progressive developments made in various police departments throughout the nation tend not to reach other departments because of this lack of communication and exchange of personnel, and the opportunity to work in different systems as occurs in the professions, in medicine, in law, in teaching, and so forth. And the significance of asking some outside people to assist us is simply to get another kind of opinion. It in no sense implies the exclusion of the recommendations of our ranking commanders. And I have been asking—

Mr. WHITENER. Yes, but it would not matter what the ranking commander had said on a fitness report. If these nomadic members of a promotion board took an action contrary to that recommendation, there would be nothing anyone could do about it.

Mr. MURPHY. Well, they will not have the authority to make the promotion. They will simply submit their comments, Mr. Congressman. The final decision will rest with me. And I will be discussing all of the promotions with Chief Layton and possibly some other members of staff.

So their authority or their function will not be to select the members but simply to provide us with one other factor.

Chief Layton and I met with people at the United States Civil Service Commission to discuss this approach, and all of us who attended that meeting felt that we could improve the process even further by doing something like this.

Mr. WHITENER. Well, as I read this newspaper article, you contemplate that there will be oral examinations by this nonresident board of officers who are being considered for promotion in Washington.

Mr. MURPHY. Well, they will—

Mr. WHITENER. Now, does this mean that the glib tongue will get the promotion, or what is the purpose?

Mr. MURPHY. No, sir; not at all. I think it will provide the officers appearing before that oral interview panel the opportunity to express their philosophy, policies.